

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 1794

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FROM AMB. SCALI

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, TD, JM
SUBJ: MEETING WITH TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO PRIME MINISTER
WILLIAMS

REF: STATE 098694, IMMERMEN/BURKE TELCON

1. I CALLED ON TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO PRIME MINISTER ERIC WILLIAMS MORNING MAY 15 TO DELIVER PERSONAL LETTER FROM SECRETARY (REFTEL). WILLIAMS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR LETTER, SAID HE "UNDERSTOOD" WHY SECRETARY COULD NOT SEE HIM AT THIS TIME AND INDICATED HE WOULD REPLY TO SECRETARY.

2. AFTER BRIEF CONVERSATION ON RECENT UNGA SPECIAL SESSION, WILLIAMS RAISED WHAT HE TERMED "MATTER OF GRAVE CONCERN" -- JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT'S SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES WITH AMERICAN ALUMINUM COMPANIES. WILLIAMS SAID THAT PRIME MINISTER MANLEY TELEPHONED HIM URGENTLY YESTERDAY TO ASK FOR TRINIDAD
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AND TOBAGO HELP IN PREVENTING AMERICAN ALUMINUM COMPANIES

FROM SABOTAGING PROPOSED CARIBBEAN JOINT VENTURE INVOLVING ALUMINUM SMELTER IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND MARKETING CONSORTIUM COMPOSED OF JAMAICA, T AND T AND POSSIBLY SURINAM. WHILE ADMITTING THAT HE DID NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND DETAILS OF "CRISIS" FACING MANLEY, WILLIAMS SAID MANLEY FEARED THAT AMERICAN ALUMINUM COMPANIES (WILLIAMS MENTIONED KAISER BY NAME) HAD CREATED SUCH A DANGEROUS SITUATION FOR HIM THAT HIS GOVT MIGHT BE OVERTHROWN. WILLIAMS, WITH CONSIDERABLE EMOTION, SAID THAT HE WISHED TO CONVEY TO USG "SAME DEGREE OF URGENCY" AS THAT EXPRESSED BY MANLEY TO HIM. HE SAID LARGE NUMBER OF GUNS MOVED ONTO ISLAND BY ANTI-MANLEY FORCES WHICH HE DID NOT IDENTIFY. WILLIAMS ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD FROM MANLEY THAT LATTER NOW FORCED TO POSTPONE CONSIDERATION OF BUDGET IN JAMAICAN PARLIAMENT IN ORDER TO MAKE LAST EFFORT TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH COMPANIES MINING BAUXITE IN JAMAICA. HE ALLEGED THAT HOURS OR NEXT FEW DAYS CRITICAL AS FAR AS JAMAICA CONCERNED.

3. WILLIAMS ALSO MADE BRIEF PITCH ON BEHALF OF US CONCESSIONS TO BWIA IN AIR ROUTE NEGOTIATIONS. HE PRAISED TEXACO'S OPERATIONS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ("WE HAVE HAD NO TROUBLE WITH THEM") BUT COMPLAINED BITTERLY ABOUT SHELL'S "SELFISH ARROGANT REFUSAL" TO CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENT OF T AND T'S ECONOMY AND THREATENED TO NATIONALIZE SHELL. ("I AM READY TO BUY THEM OUT TOMORROW.")

4. COMMENT: WILLIAMS SAID COLDLY AT ONE POINT: "MANLEY TALKS PUBLICLY WHEN HE'S IN TROUBLE. I SAY NOTHING AND JUST DON'T SEE ANYONE." IMPLICATION OF HIS REMARKS WAS THAT IF USG DOESN'T LISTEN TO HIM NOW, HE'LL REVERT TO FORMER ATTITUDE OF REFUSING TO TALK TO USG. SINCE I TOTALLY UNAWARE OF PROBLEM IN JAMAICA, I PROMISED ONLY TO CONVEY WILLIAMS' CONCERNS TO HIGHEST LEVELS OF DEPARTMENT.

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